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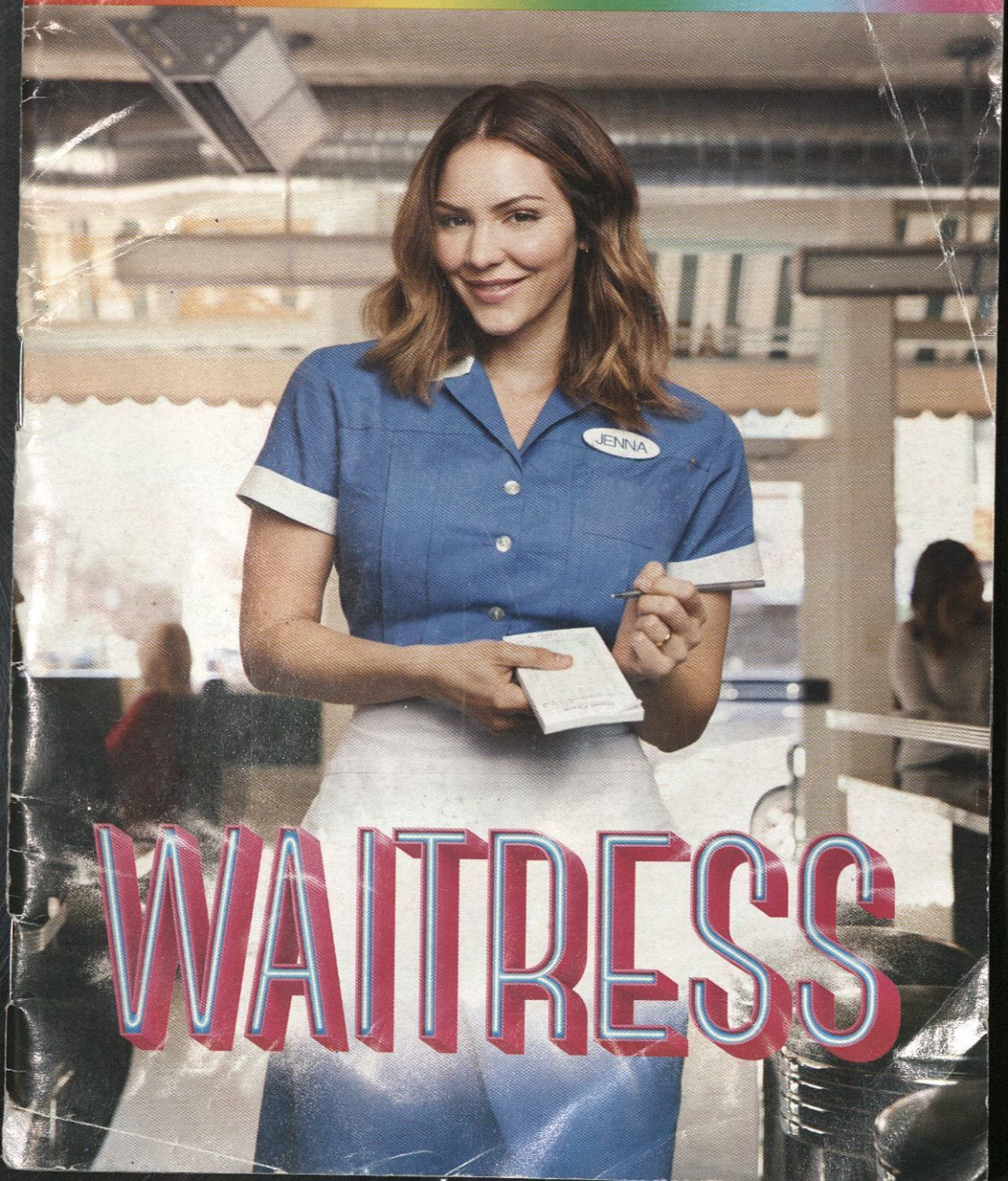

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MARC J. FRANKLIN

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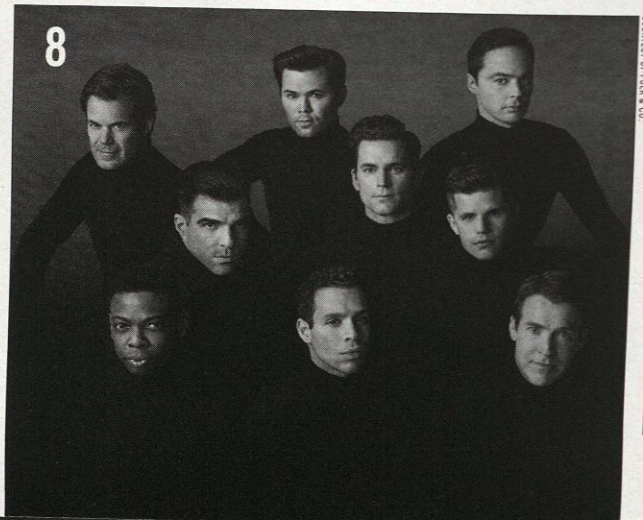

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Summer-Time **Blues**

How Paul Tazewell found his signature color for Donna Summer

By Ruthie Fierbeg

When Tony Award–winning costume designer Paul Tazewell thinks of Donna Summer, the queen of disco and the driving force of his latest Broadway project *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical*, he thinks back to when he first met the music icon. "There was a mystique that I remember," says Tazewell. In bringing her life story to the stage, the designer wanted to capture that aura, an elegance as he recalls.

MARC J. FRANKLIN

Three dresses representing different stages of Donna Summer's life

Told as a memory play—in which Diva Donna (Tony winner LaChanze) looks back on the rise of her career in Disco Donna (Tony nominee Ariana DeBose) and the young dreamer in Duckling Donna (newcomer Storm Lever)—*Summer* relies on Tazewell's ability to use wardrobe as a unifier.

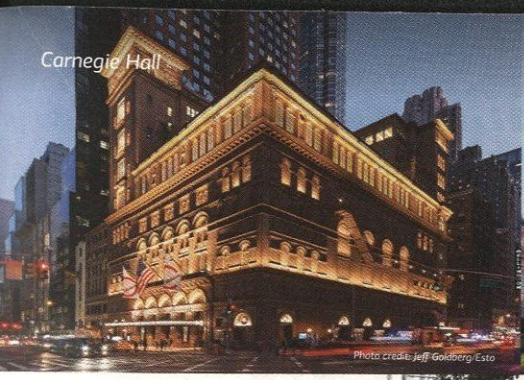
"Holding all of the Donnas together was the most important thing," says Tazewell. The designer chose royal blue, "piercing enough to break through the rest of the activity," as the thread to knit his Donnas together.

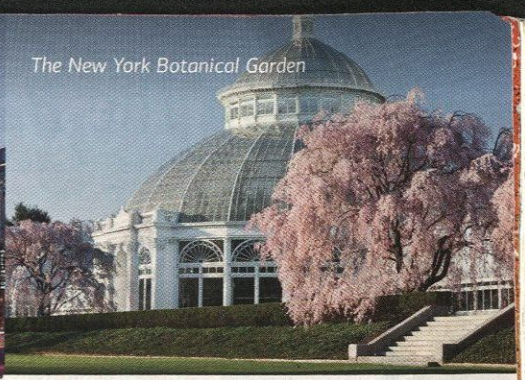
"I was choosing a tone that would be able to transition from scene to scene, from year to year, and feel a little more seamless," he says. The succession of flashbacks, flash forwards, and rapid-fire scene changes used to convey Summer's story presented a singular challenge for Tazewell, but also an opportunity for ingenuity. "When she's giving up her child and then she turns around and is in the center of the stage doing 'MacArthur Park' in a concert and magically transforms into that concert gown, we're able to do that [onstage quick change] with theatre magic. It's kind of like Cinderella."

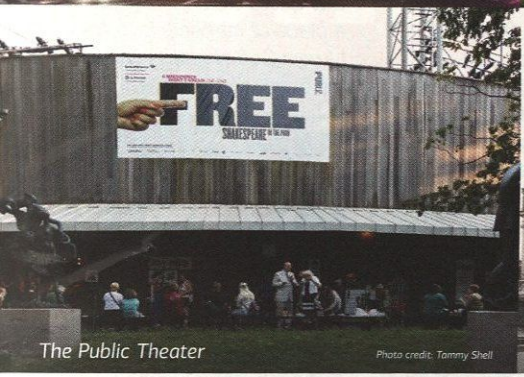
Of course, Tazewell also needed to recreate the disco era via his designs for the musical's ensemble. He drew on the warm colors and earth tones of '70s style for these supporting players to make Donna pop in that blue; but if his colors were an exercise in contrasts and new ideas, his shapes needed to conjure familiarity for the audience. "The contemporary body is so different from that 1970s body; it's much more athletic [now]," he says. "My design is trying to arrive at silhouettes that will still carry you back and feel nostalgic, but also be inviting, as well, so that you can see them as cool and sexy and party-like and all those things that are about the disco—or our idea of what the disco was."

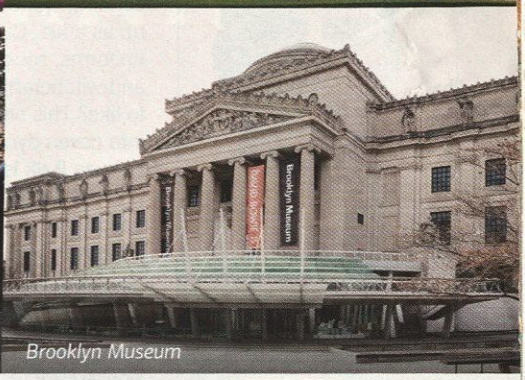
Creating authentic silhouettes marked another test for Tazewell, as *Summer* features an ensemble of women playing both male and female roles. "We're buying into the idea of androgyny," Tazewell explains. "We acknowledged the female form and made clothes fit them best and it was up to their physicality [to make] them more masculine."

As a storyteller, Tazewell's main concern is that his audience stays swept up in the electricity of Summer's hits—from "Hot Stuff" to "Bad Girls" to "Love to Love You Baby." "It's getting the audience to really connect to what's going on," says Tazewell, "so that you're never pulled out of the moment."









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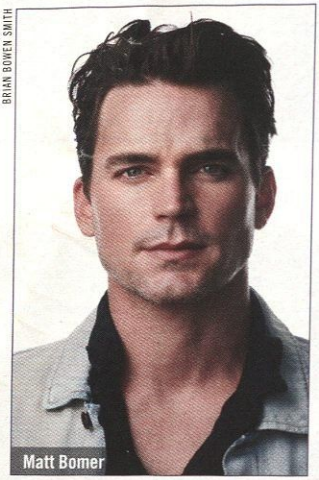
Strike Up The *Band*

The men of *The Boys in the Band* share the queer pop culture that shaped them in honor of the play's 50th anniversary

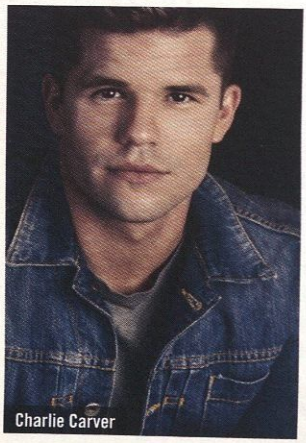
BRIAN BOWEN SMITH



Matt Bomer

MATT BOMER

It may be an obvious choice, but I would say *Will and Grace*. There was something about that show being in people's living rooms every week that took away a lot of people's fears and stigmas. I know it's not a piece that includes every aspect of gay life, but it really did help to move the dial in terms of social progress.



Charlie Carver

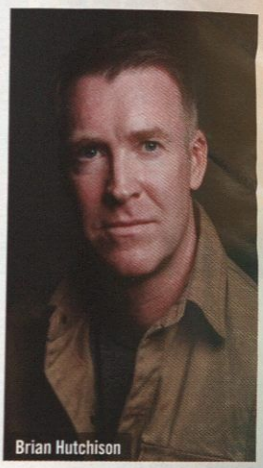
CHARLIE CARVER

The Craft! I don't know if this totally qualifies as gay pop culture, but it certainly queered my heart up as a kid. Cute school uniforms, social outcasts, and witchcraft? What's not to like? This one goes deep into coven dynamics, and Fairuza Balk is nothing short of genius. Plus a good binding spell is all too necessary in 2018.

Robin De Jesús

ROBIN DE JESÚS

The Color Purple. The joy and release on Celie's face when she kissed Shug Avery shook me. I had never seen two women kiss. But the real heart of the story for me is the construct that Shug uses to describe God to Celie: "God is inside you and inside everybody else. You come into the world with God. But only them that search for it inside find it. And sometimes it just manifest itself even if you not looking, or don't know what you looking for." All those times I thought being gay was the absence of God, this quote would bring me to a place of introspection and I knew God wouldn't make me anything less than.



Brian Hutchison

BRIAN HUTCHISON

Longtime Companion was so significant for me, in terms of showing accurate portrayals of several distinct gay relationships. The uncompromising, all-encompassing, and unconditional love that they had for each other made an indelible impression. I've worked with a few guys who acted in this film over the years and I always ask about it—it really stayed with me and is all around just beautiful. ▶

***The Boys in the Band*, directed by Joe Mantello, is currently running at the Booth Theatre.**

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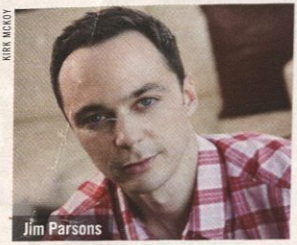


Jim Parsons

JIM PARSONS

The plays of Charles Busch, and there really isn't a close second. Participating in Busch's works placed me in a world I had never fully dreamed of, but one that made me, a young adult figuring out his sexuality and his career, feel more at home than I'd ever felt before. I found a freedom as a performer that was impossible to shake once tasted—much the same way that, once I let myself admit I was in love with another guy, there was no going back. No one wants to live falsely, onstage or off. Especially on. Ha!

CHIUN-KAI SHIH

Zachary Quinto

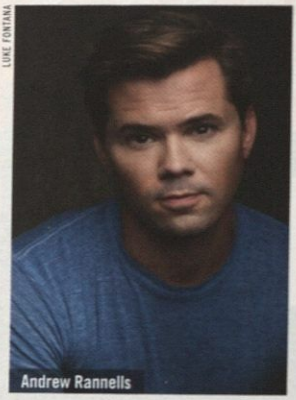
ZACHARY QUINTO

Barbra Streisand's *Hello, Dolly!* and *Funny Girl*. They each have the magnificence of full-out movie musical spectacles anchored by phenomenally executed work by a true icon.

ANDREW RANNELLS

The Tony Awards were hugely informative for me as a kid. They still are. And thanks to YouTube, there are so many past clips available online. I would have to say that two of my all-time favorites are Patti LuPone in *Evita* singing "A New Argentina" and Bernadette Peters in *Gypsy* singing "Rose's Turn." If you haven't seen either of these, treat yourself.

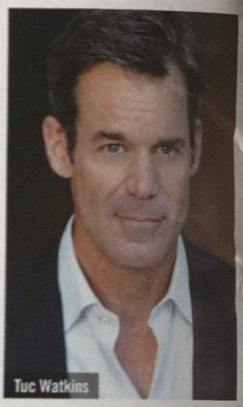
LUKE FONTANA



Andrew Rannells

MICHAEL BENJAMIN WASHINGTON

Every generation needs to know the grand triumvirate of Michael Bennett, Michael Peters, and Bob Avian and their gift called *Dreamgirls*. The audacity of bringing the story of three African-American leading ladies and three African-American leading men to life in Broadway's most destitute of times, brought this child of the '80s great joy.



Tuc Watkins

TUC WATKINS

Madonna: 1990. Trailblazer, role model, gay icon. "Vogue" had us on the dance floor. Blonde Ambition had us at the concert. *Dick Tracy* had us at the movies. *The Immaculate Collection* was at the front of our CD collection. George H.W. Bush may have been president in 1990, but Madonna was God.

Michael Benjamin Washington

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VOICE OF AN ANGEL

James McArdle on fearlessly wrestling with Louis in *Angels in America*

By Ruthie Fierberg

MARIE J. FRANKLIN

Meeting James McArdle in person is startling after witnessing him as Louis Ironson in *Angels in America*. Gone is Louis' urgent self-interruptive chatter, his tensed shoulders, his self-flagellating anxiety—replaced instead by a thick Scottish brogue, a warm resonance, and a chilled-out vibe as McArdle kicks his feet up on the couch in his fifth-floor dressing room at Broadway's Neil Simon Theatre. He's about to begin an eight-hour marathon of both parts in the Tony Kushner epic, *Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*, but McArdle doesn't think about the great work as a whole. "I literally take it hour by hour," he says. "When I step onstage I like to be thinking it for real—in real time."

McArdle has been stepping into Louis' skin for over a year, having debuted with the production at London's National Theatre prior to its Broadway transfer. From the beginning, Louis' voice came instinctively to McArdle. "Tony's so musical that it's written in a way that I could just hear Louis," he says of the piece. "As soon as I started reading, 'Why has democracy succeeded in America?' I could just hear it so clearly and I didn't have to think about, 'What will I do with my voice?' It honestly just felt really natural to me."

He's not a musician, but McArdle relies on his ear and a sense of musicality to dig into the layers of Louis. "Louis literally trips over himself," says McArdle. "There are so many beats where he literally stops, changes gear, and goes into something else. I just love finding those moments that I think are so how people speak, you know? I hear the way they talk, interrupt themselves, start again." Which is exactly what McArdle does as he wrestles a monstrous 23-minute monologue—a diatribe with its own title—with daring propulsion.

McArdle felt a responsibility to dig even deeper when bringing *Angels* to Broadway. "To get honest for a second, it is the privilege of my lifetime to be able to do this part on Broadway, and I absolutely don't take it lightly," he says, adding that he knows Kushner and director Marianne Elliott could have chosen someone with more real-life commonalities to Louis. "I knew I just had to go another layer or the sharks would have been out like, 'I smell Scotland.'"

He and his castmates met with survivors of the AIDS epidemic to further grasp a piece of history he'd never known. "I was just—and still am—so shocked that it's not more part of our education and our history," he says. "I thought, 'Why has it taken me to actively pursue this information?'"

McArdle hesitates when he thinks about finishing this run. "Louis feels like a separate entity from me that I'm really going to say, 'Goodbye,'" he says. "I feel sad about that. People don't like him because he's not a hero. I love him for that fact."

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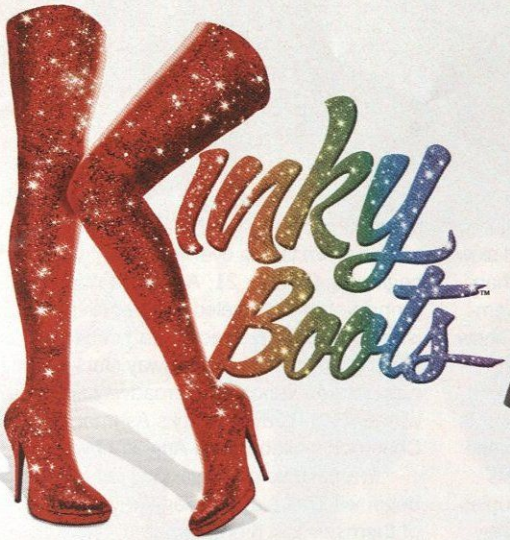

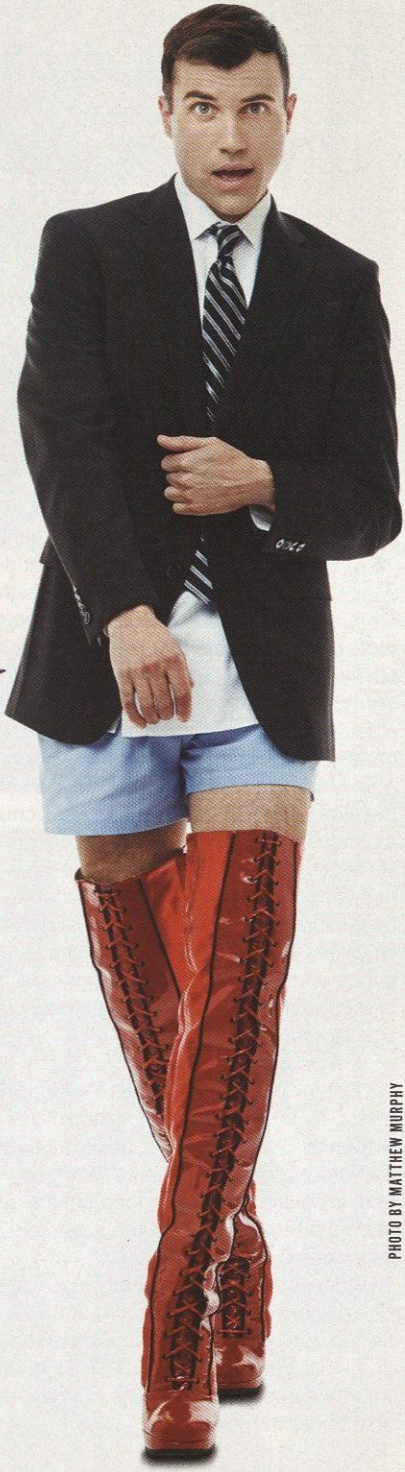

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World premiere produced by the American Repertory Theater at Harvard University, August 2, 2015
Diane Paulus, Artistic Director and Diane Borger, Producer
Peter Duchan, Script Consultant

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Jenna ..... KATHARINE McPHEE
Cal ..... BENNY ELLEDGE
Dawn ..... CAITLIN HOULAHAN
Becky ..... NaTASHA YVETTE WILLIAMS
Joe ..... STEVE VINOVICH
Earl ..... BEN THOMPSON
Mother ..... KERI RENÉ FULLER
Father ..... MATT DeANGELIS
Nurse Norma ..... TIFFANY MANN
Dr. Pomatter ..... ERICH BERGEN
Ogie ..... CHRISTOPHER FITZGERALD
Francine ..... STEPHANIE TORNS
Lulu (*Wed., Thur., Sun.*) ..... VICTORIA COLLETT
Lulu (*Tue., Fri., Sat.*) ..... KATIE GROBER
Ensemble ..... KAYLA DAVION, TYRONE DAVIS, JR., MATT DeANGELIS, LAW TERRELL DUNFORD, KERI RENÉ FULLER, TIFFANY MANN, STEPHANIE TORNS

SWINGS

ANDREW FITCH, TIFFANY DENISE HOBBS, MOLLY JOBE, BRANDON KALM

Dance Captain: ANDREW FITCH

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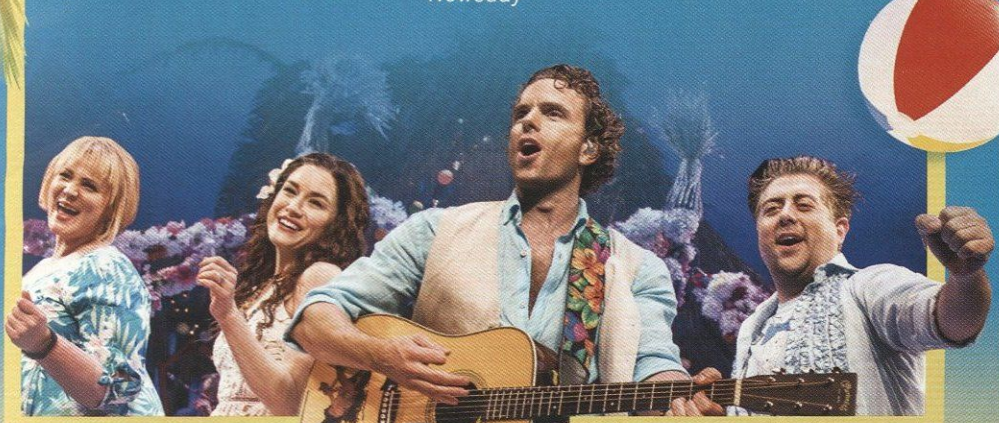

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MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

"What's Inside" ..... Jenna and Company
"Opening Up" ..... Jenna, Becky, Dawn, Cal and Company
"The Negative" ..... Jenna, Becky, Dawn
"What Baking Can Do" ..... Jenna
"Club Knocked Up" ..... Women
"When He Sees Me" ..... Dawn and Company
"It Only Takes a Taste" ..... Dr. Pomatter and Jenna
"You Will Still Be Mine" ..... Earl and Jenna
"A Soft Place to Land" ..... Jenna, Becky, Dawn
"Never Ever Getting Rid of Me" ..... Ogie and Company
"Bad Idea" ..... Jenna, Dr. Pomatter, Company

ACT TWO

"I Didn't Plan It" ..... Becky
"Bad Idea" (Reprise) ..... Company
"You Matter to Me" ..... Dr. Pomatter and Jenna
"I Love You Like a Table" ..... Ogie, Dawn, Company
"Take It From an Old Man" ..... Joe and Company
"She Used to Be Mine" ..... Jenna
"Everything Changes" ..... Jenna and Company
"Opening Up" (Finale) ..... Company

MUSICIANS

Conductor/Piano: Nadia DiGiallonardo
Associate Conductor/Keyboard: Adam Michael Kaufman;
Drums: Rich Mercurio; Bass: Lee Nadel;
Cello/Guitar: Yair Evnine; Guitar: Meghan Toohey

Music Coordinator: John Miller

WAITRESS *WILL BE PERFORMED WITH ONE 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION.*

This musical is dedicated with love and gratitude to
the memory of Adrienne Shelly.
Adrienneshellyfoundation.org

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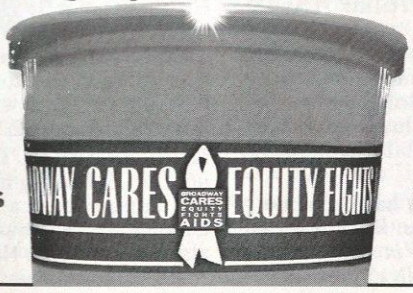

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

KATHARINE McPHEE (*Jenna*). Since first appearing on "American Idol," she's become a successful recording artist, climbing *Billboard*'s pop, jazz and adult-contemporary charts. She co-starred in the 2013 NBC-TV musical series "Smash," executive produced by Steven Spielberg, and currently stars in the CBS TV drama "Scorpion." Katharine thanks her family and fellow *Waitress* cast members for this life-changing opportunity.

NaTASHA YVETTE WILLIAMS (*Becky*). Ecstatic to join *Waitress*! Broadway: *Chicago* (Mama Morton), *A Night With Janis Joplin* (Aretha, Joplinaire), *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* (Mariah), *The Color Purple* (Sofia). TV includes "Orange Is the New Black," "The Wiz Live" and "Odd Mom Out." Love to Gregory and BRS/GAGE! NaTasha is also a recording artist. Follow her: @natashayvettewilliams, www.natashayvettewilliams.com.

CAITLIN HOULAHAN (*Dawn*). Broadway debut! Recent: *The Bridges of Madison County* (Carolyn, 1st nat'l), *Parade* (Iola, Lincoln Center), *The 25th...Spelling Bee* (Olive, Bucks Co. Playhouse), *The Theory of Relativity* (Julie, Goodspeed). TV/film: "Peter Pan Live!" (Jane), "Girls" (season six). Proud BWMT grad. Special thanks to SMS, Pat and Telsey + Co. and the *Waitress* team for making her dreams come true. Love to her family and Ryguy! @caithoula

ERICH BERGEN (*Dr. Pomatter*). Broadway debut. Erich currently plays Blake Moran on the CBS drama "Madam Secretary," beginning its 5th season this fall. In 2014 he starred as Bob Gaudio in the film *Jersey Boys*, reprising his performance from the national tour and Las Vegas productions of the show. Thank you for everything, Michael Larsen. IG/FB/Twitter: @erichbergen

BEN THOMPSON (*Earl*). Broadway: *Matilda* (Trunchbull), *Holler if Ya Hear Me* (Griffy), *American Idiot*. Off-Broadway: *Carrie* (Billy), *Rent*. TV/film: "Law & Order: SVU," "Daredevil," "BULL," *The Seagull, Freedom, The Greatest Showman*. Gratitude to family, my team at Abrams and Vanguard, Pat/Telsey+Co, Sara B. and *Waitress* creatives. Proud husband to Kat, new dad to daughter Tala! TCU alumnus. @itsbenthompson

STEVE VINOVICH (*Joe*) has been doing this acting thing for a while. Broadway: *All the Way, Loose Ends, Lost in Yonkers, The Magic Show, The Robber Bridegroom, The Grand Tour, The Secret Rapture*. National tour: *The Dinner Party*. Film: *The Intern, The Santa Clause, Awakenings, Mannequin*, Puffin in *The Swan Princess*. www.stevevinovich.com

BENNY ELLEDGE (*Cal*). Broadway debut! PUMPED to join *Waitress*!! No time for recent credits, only tons of people to thank for helping me get here! Massive thanks to The Price Group, Windmill Studios, University of MN-Duluth Theatre, Telsey & Co, the whole *Waitress* team and most importantly Mom and Dad. Much Love! SKOL!!

CHRISTOPHER FITZGERALD (*Ogie*) has spent 25 years on Broadway, Off-Broadway and in theatres around the world. He has been nominated for and has received many awards. He has acted in television and film. He'd love to go into detail but only has 50 words and has unfortunately run out of.

VICTORIA COLLETT (*Lulu*). Broadway debut! Victoria enjoys making up songs and calls herself a foodie. She loves pies! Grateful to her family, John Mara Jr., Katie Oxman, Telsey + Co and Team *Waitress*! YouTube "The Foodie Sisters," Instagram @missvictoriacollett.

KAYLA DAVION (*Ensemble, u/s Dawn*). Having just graduated from Ball State University, Kayla is now making her Broadway debut in such an amazing show as this one! Endless thanks to family and friends. "To God be the Glory!"

TYRONE DAVIS, JR. (*Ensemble, u/s Ogie*). Broadway debut! Credits include Off-Broadway: *Invisible Thread* (Second Stage Theater). Tours: *Shrek* (first national). Regional: A.R.T., The Old Globe, Goodspeed Musicals, Dallas Theater Center, Vineyard Playhouse. New World School of the Arts. Love to my family! @tyronedavisjr

MATT DeANGELIS (*Ensemble, u/s Dr. Pomatter, u/s Earl*). Broadway/ West End: *Hair*. 1st nat'l: *Hair, American Idiot, Once*. TV: "Person of Interest," "Madam Secretary." Most looking forward to the role of husband to his beautiful fiancée Christine!! www.mattdeangelis.com @MattDeAngelis22

LAW TERRELL DUNFORD (*Ensemble, u/s Cal*) is making his Broadway debut, and has appeared in a number of roles with Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. He was also seen at Town Hall's Broadway's Rising Stars 2016 and Feinstein's/54 Below. Law is

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

a Tom Hanks Scholar and proud alumnus of the BFA acting program, Wright State University.

ANDREW FITCH (*Swing, u/s Cal, u/s Joe*). Broadway: *Pippin, Chicago, Monty Python's Spamalot*. Tours: *Spamalot, Billy Elliot*. Thank you to this entire company for welcoming me to the diner. I couldn't be happier! Thank you to Christopher and team at CGF Talent!

KERI RENÉ FULLER (*Ensemble, u/s Jenna*). Broadway debut! Regional: *Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Esmeralda), *Murder Ballad* (Sara), *Lizzie Borden* (Lizzie). Special thanks to CGF, Pat and Telsey + Co. and the *Waitress* family for the magic. Love to BWMT'15, Mom, Dad and Michael. @krfuller13

KATIE GROBER (*Lulu*) is very excited to make her Broadway debut in *Waitress*. Katie would like to thank the Lord for this opportunity, her family for all their love and support, and CESD! I can do all things...

TIFFANY DENISE HOBBS (*Swing, u/s Becky*). Broadway debut! National tour: *The Lion King* (Shenzi). Television: "Atlanta," "Ozark," "Love Is_," "The Haunting of Hill House," "Scream," "Code Black." Gratitude to God, my family, my friends and my love. IG: @tiffanydenisehobbs

MOLLY JOBE (*Swing, u/s Jenna, u/s Dawn*). Broadway: *Newsies, A Christmas Carol*. 1st nat'l/regional: *Newsies, Annie* (Paper Mill Playhouse). BFA, NYU New Studio on Broadway. Endless thanks to my family, Henderson Hogan, Telsey and the *Waitress* team. Let's bake the world a better place!

BRANDON KALM (*Swing, u/s Dr. Pomatter, u/s Earl, u/s Ogie*). Broadway: *American Psycho*. The Public's Shakespeare in the Park: *The Tempest*. National/international tour: *American Idiot*. TV/film: "Z: The Beginning of Everything." Esper studio grad. Pace MT. Thank you Creative, Pat, Bryan, DBA, Fam, Odd. @brandonkalm

TIFFANY MANN (*Ensemble, u/s Becky*). TV: "Rise," "Orange Is the New Black." Off-Broadway: *Jerry Springer the Opera, Invisible Thread, Cabin in the Sky*. Other theatre: *Dreamgirls, The Color Purple, Hairspray*. "We finally got our piece of the pie!" @iamtiffanymann

STEPHANIE TORNS (*Ensemble, u/s Jenna, u/s Dawn*). *Wicked* (Elphaba Standby). Regional: *Waitress* (A.R.T.), *Wicked, 9 to 5* (Judy), *Les Misérables* (Eponine). Special thanks to the creative team and to my family who show me constant love and support. This one's for you Pa!

SARA BAREILLES (*Music & Lyrics*) is a six-time Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter and a *New York Times* best-selling author. Since her 2007 debut, *Little Voice*, she has released five studio albums including her most recent, *What's Inside: Songs From Waitress*. *Waitress* marks her Broadway debut. She is over the moon about it. www.sarabmusic.com

JESSIE NELSON (*Book*) waitressed for ten years before writing, directing, and producing *Corrina, Corrina* and *I Am Sam;* directing *Love the Coopers;* co-writing *Stepmom* and *The Story of Us;* and producing *Danny Collins*. She co-wrote *Alice by Heart* with Steven Sater and Duncan Sheik, worked with Mabou Mines and was artistic director of the Sundance Writers Lab.

DIANE PAULUS (*Director*). Broadway: *Finding Neverland*, Tony Award-winning revivals of *Pippin* (also Tony Award, Best Direction), *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* and *Hair*. Diane is the Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director of the American Repertory Theater at Harvard University, and was selected for the 2014 TIME 100, *Time* magazine's annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world.

LORIN LATARRO (*Choreographer*). Credits: *Waiting for Godot* with Sirs Patrick Stewart and Ian McKellen; Lin-Manuel Miranda's *21 Chump Street; Curious Incident of the Dog*... (Assoc.); The Public's *Odyssey; Queen of the Night; American Idiot* (Assoc.); *Beaches* (Drury Lane); *Kiss Me, Kate* (Barrington). Performer in 14 Broadway shows, Twyla Tharp, Momix. Bucks County Playhouse Artistic Associate and Juilliard graduate. www.LorinLatarro.com

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ADRIENNE SHELLY. We celebrate Adrienne Shelly as the writer of the 2007 film *Waitress*. An actor (*Trust*) and director (*Waitress, I'll Take You There, Sudden Manhattan*) for almost 20 years, she conceived the film while pregnant with her daughter Sophie (Lulu in the film), for whom she wrote it as a "love letter" in just two weeks.

Adrienne's legacy includes The Adrienne Shelly Foundation, created after she died in 2006 to support Women Filmmakers. It's awarded 65+ production grants to talented

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

women all over the world. Please visit www.adrienneshellyfoundation.org to honor Adrienne's memory and support ASF's critical artistic mission.

NADIA DIGIALLONARDO (*Music Supervision & Arrangements*) worked with Diane Paulus on the Broadway revivals of *Hair* and *Pippin*, and continues to supervise the *Pippin* tour. Nadia and her sisters are frequent guests on "A Prairie Home Companion" and recently released their live CD, *Shout, Sister, Shout!* Nadia graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Vassar with a degree in Urban Planning.

SARA BAREILLES and THE WAITRESS BAND (*Orchestrations*). Sara Bareilles, Nadia DiGiallonardo, Rich Mercurio, Lee Nadel, Yair Evnine, Rich Hinman and Jamie Edwards. With Sara Bareilles, the band engaged in a deeply collaborative process to create the arrangements for the *Waitress* score. A group that includes singers, multi-instrumentalists, writers and producers from all different corners of the pop and theatre world, they've each contributed their own unique ingredients to the pie.

SCOTT PASK (*Scenic Design*) has designed more than 45 Broadway shows, receiving three Tony Awards for *The Book of Mormon, The Coast of Utopia* and *The Pillowman*. Cirque du Soleil's *Amaluna*, Met Opera's *Peter Grimes*. He has received Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, Lortel, Broadway World, Bessie, Hewes and Garland awards. Honorary Doctorate, University of Arizona.

SUTTIRAT ANNE LARLARB (*Costume Design*). Screen: *Steve Jobs, The Walk*, "London 2012 Olympic Opening Ceremony" (Emmy), *Slumdog Millionaire* (CDG Award), *127 Hours* (ADG nom), *Sunshine, The Extra Man*, "Cinema Verite" (Emmy nom.), *The American, The Good Lie*. Theatre: *Of Mice and Men, Finding Neverland, Hold on to Me Darling, Dying for It, The Killer, Frankenstein, Selma '65*.

CHRISTOPHER AKERLIND (*Lighting Design*). Broadway includes *The Last Ship, Rocky* (Tony nom.), *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* (Tony nom.), *Superior Donuts, In My Life, Awake and Sing!* (Tony nom.), *Seven Guitars* (Tony nom.) and *The Light in the Piazza* (2005 Tony Award). Recent: Martha Clarke's new pieces *Angel Reapers* and *Cheri* (Signature Theatre Company).

JONATHAN DEANS (*Sound Design*). From the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden to *Michael Jackson ONE* in Las Vegas, Broadway, West End, theme parks, hotels and retail, Jonathan has designed sound systems around the world, picking up a number of awards and nominations along the way. He teaches and is a consultant developing leading-edge sound products. www.designingsound.com

RACHEL PADULA SHUFELT AND JASON ALLEN (*Wig and Makeup Design*). Broadway: *The 39 Steps, The Glass Menagerie*. Regional: *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812, Marie Antoinette* and *Crossing* (American Repertory Theater); *The Colored Museum, A Confederacy of Dunces*, Huntington Theatre. TV: "Desperate Crossing" (Primetime Emmy nomination).

THOMAS SCHALL (*Fight Consultant*). More than 60 Broadway shows: *The Crucible, Blackbird, The Color Purple, China Doll, Allegiance, This Is Our Youth, Of Mice and Men, Romeo and Juliet, Lucky Guy, Death of a Salesman, Venus in Fur, War Horse*.

JUNIPER STREET PRODUCTIONS (*Production Manager*) is Hillary Blanken, Joseph DeLuise, Guy Kwan, Ana Rose Greene and Victoria Bullard. Selected shows include *Tuck Everlasting, Fully Committed, The Color Purple, Spring Awakening, Fun Home, Something Rotten!, Finding Neverland, On the Town, Disgraced, Beautiful, Spider-Man, Memphis, The Producers* and *Fosse*.

JOHN MILLER (*Music Coordinator*). More than 100 Broadway shows. Recent: *American Psycho, Something Rotten!, Les Misérables, Beautiful, Jersey Boys*. Musician (bass): Leonard Cohen, Eric Clapton, Michael Jackson, BB King, Portishead, Bette Midler, Bob Dylan, Harry Connick Jr.

THOMAS J. GATES (*Production Stage Manager*). Broadway: *The Visit, Pippin, Newsies, Finian's Rainbow, Hairspray, High Fidelity, Brooklyn, Noises Off*. Tours: *Brooklyn, White Christmas, Chicago, Joseph...Dreamcoat, Grease*. Off-Broadway: *The Exonerated, The Normal Heart*. Regional: *Waitress* (A.R.T.), *Emma: The Musical* (Old Globe).

BECKY FLEMING (*Stage Manager*). Broadway: *Newsies*. 1st national tour: *Newsies*. Regional: *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Paper Mill Playhouse, McCarter Theatre, Colorado

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Shakespeare Festival. NY: NYTW, Playwrights Horizons. For my family, always.

ANITA SHASTRI (*Assistant Stage Manager*). Broadway: *Beautiful*. Regional favorites: *Beauty and the Beast, Billy Elliot* (The Muny), *These Paper Bullets!, Familiar* (Yale Repertory Theatre). MFA: Yale School of Drama. Endless love to my family, teachers and this amazing team!

TELSEY + COMPANY (*Casting*). Broadway: *SpongeBob SquarePants; Once on This Island; The Parisian Woman; M. Butterfly; Anastasia; Charlie…; Hello, Dolly!; War Paint; Come From Away; Hamilton; Kinky Boots; Wicked*. Film: *Miss Sloane, Into the Woods, Margin Call, Rachel Getting Married*. TV: "This Is Us," "House of Cards," "One Day at a Time," "Graves," "Atypical," commercials. www.telseyandco.com

B.J. HOLT (*General Manager*). Management and consulting positions for Broadway, West End, U.S. and international touring theatrical productions including *Chicago, Finding Neverland, Fosse, La Cage aux Folles, Les Misérables, Miss Saigon, Pippin, Priscilla Queen of the Desert, Seussical* and *Sweet Charity*. For Christina and Payson, always!

DAVE HARRIS (*Company Manager*). Broadway: *Waitress, Chicago, Finding Neverland, The Full Monty, Street Corner Symphony, Angels in America*. National tours: *Chicago, Aida, Sunset Boulevard, Show Boat, Grease, Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Former Director of Operations of the Broward Center for the Performing Arts.

NANCY HARRINGTON (*Associate Director*). With Ms. Paulus, most recently *Finding Neverland* and the Tony Award-winning productions of *Pippin, The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* and *Hair*. As Bill Irwin's collaborator for 25 years, she was one of the creators of *Fool Moon, Largely NY* and *Regard of Flight*.

MIA WALKER (*Associate Director*). Broadway/nat'l tour: A.R.T.'s *Finding Neverland, Pippin, The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*. Off-Broadway: *Invisible Thread* (A.R.T./Second Stage), *Prometheus Bound* (A.R.T.), *The Capeman* (Public). Directing: The Flea (Resident Director), Ensemble Studio Theatre, NYMF. BA, Harvard University. www.miapwalker.com

ABBEY O'BRIEN (*Associate Choreographer*). Choreography: "Letterman," "Fallon," *Dreamgirls* (Theatre Raleigh), *True Love* (TriArts Playhouse), *Spamalot* (Atlanta Lyric). Associate director/choreographer: *Odyssey* (Public Theater), *Double Portrait, Elf* (Paper Mill), *Ragtime* (Lincoln Center), *Company* (Bucks County). www.abbeyobrien.com

AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER is the world-renowned theater at Harvard University. Under Artistic Director Diane Paulus, the A.R.T. has launched the Tony-winning productions of *All the Way, Pippin, Once, The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*. Currently on Broadway: *Finding Neverland* and Off-Broadway: *Sleep No More, Nice Fish*. Upcoming Broadway: *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812*.

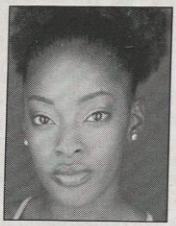
BARRY AND FRAN WEISSLER (*Producer*). Recipients of seven Tony Awards including the longest-running American musical in the world, *Chicago*, which has been presented in over 25 countries in more than a dozen languages and is celebrating its 20th anniversary on Broadway this year!

NORTON AND ELAYNE HERRICK (*Producer*) own Herrick Company, with property transactions totaling $5 billion. Kentucky Derby/Belmont Stakes/ Dubai World Cup winner. Herrick Entertainment has produced and financed many exceptional Broadway shows including Tony Award-winning *Hair* and *Pippin* and many films including Critics Choice Award-winner *Lone Survivor* and the new hit reality TV show, "American Beauty Star." theherrickcompany.com.

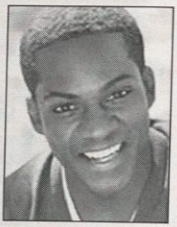
ALECIA PARKER (*Executive Producer*). Credits: Worldwide *Chicago, Pippin, Finding Neverland*, etc. Currently licensing *Once the Musical* internationally. Other credits, spanning more than 30 years, include executive producer of *La Cage aux Folles, The Scottsboro Boys, Sweet Charity, Wonderful Town, Seussical*, etc. Proud mother of Michael.

DAVID I. BERLEY (*Producer*). Lifelong lover of the Great American Songbook, David is a real estate investor and Walter & Samuels chairman. He is delighted to make his Broadway debut as a producer.

INDEPENDENT PRESENTERS NETWORK (*Producer*) is a consortium of leading presenters of touring Broadway shows in cities throughout North America. Recent Broadway/national tours: *Dear Evan Hansen; Hello, Dolly!; Cats; Waitress; The Color Purple; On Your Feet!; An American in Paris;* and *Pippin*.



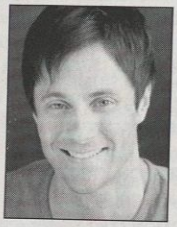
Kayla Davion



Tyrone Davis, Jr.

Matt DeAngelis

Law Terrell Dunford

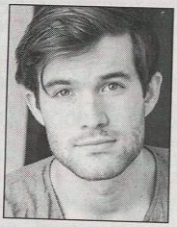


Andrew Fitch

Keri René Fuller

Tiffany Denise Hobbs

Molly Jobe



Brandon Kalm

Tiffany Mann

Stephanie Torns

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OFF-BROADWAY VOICES: THE SEARCH FOR EMPATHY

By Olivia Clement

Daniella Topol, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater

Daniella Topol has always had a curiosity about making theatre from multiple vantage points. It's the reason she's made a career out of balancing directing and artistic management—and the key to both, she says, is finding empathy in the process. "Theatre asks for a kind of intimacy and empathy that I've always deeply loved," says Topol.

MARC J. FRANKLIN

Daniella Topol

"I didn't always know it to be empathy, but that's what I now understand it to be." And for the last two years in her role as artistic director of Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, that idea has taken on entirely new meaning.

Founded in 1994 by Gary Bonasorte and David Van Asselt (whom Topol succeeded), Rattlestick's mission is grounded in not only producing new work that inspires empathy, but in offering it to artists in ways that promote boldness and ambition. "The DNA of the theatre is one of courage and innovation," says Topol. "I want to continue to stay fearless and tenacious in supporting artists with big vision." Artists like Diana Oh, who first came through Rattlestick's New Songs Now concert series, and whose genre-bending mainstage show *My Lingerie Play* received critical acclaim last year; or alumni playwright Samuel D. Hunter, whose two-play project *Lewiston & Clarkson* Rattlestick will produce next season as a large-scale double bill.

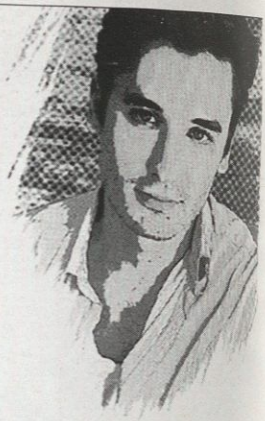
Throughout the theatre's history, Rattlestick has launched the careers of playwrights Annie Baker, Adam Rapp, Martyna Majok, and Lucy Thurber, among others. The organization also continues to nurture and support its apprentice company of young theatremakers, as well as provide artists with opportunities to share space and create. Topol has long been passionate about new work development and she's adamant that this continue to be a part of the theatre's "vibrant, artistic heartbeat."

As Rattlestick approaches its 25th anniversary, Topol's vision for the company is to expand on the radical empathy it offers its artists by further being in conversation with the community—specifically its immediate West Village neighborhood. Under her leadership, the theatre is developing a new theatrical piece, written by Cusi Cram and directed by Topol, which will celebrate the life and legacy of the now-closed St. Vincent's Hospital, ground zero during New York City's AIDS crisis. Rattlestick has partnered with community centers, a nearby church, and local artist and advocacy groups in the development of the play, set to debut in a workshop production this summer.

Leaning in to new partnerships, says Topol, is towards the ultimate goal of making theatre "more and more vital to the conversation." For the artistic director, theatre has always been, and remains, essential; and never has this been clearer than in her position as leader of Rattlestick. "It's about the process of the audience meeting the work and finding a conversation around the work that makes them look at the world differently."

PUT IT IN WRITING: SAY DADA

By Olivia Clement & David Gewirtzman



Name: Seth Numrich

Hometown: St. Paul, MN

Current Show: Travesties

Zodiac Sign: Capricorn

I'm drawn to theatre that is

Bold, challenging and unapologetically theatrical

In my dressing room you'll find

Too much chocolate

One book every actor should read is

'The Fervent Years' by Harold Clurman

One film every person should watch is

'It's a Wonderful Life'

A place I'd really love to visit is

Patagonia

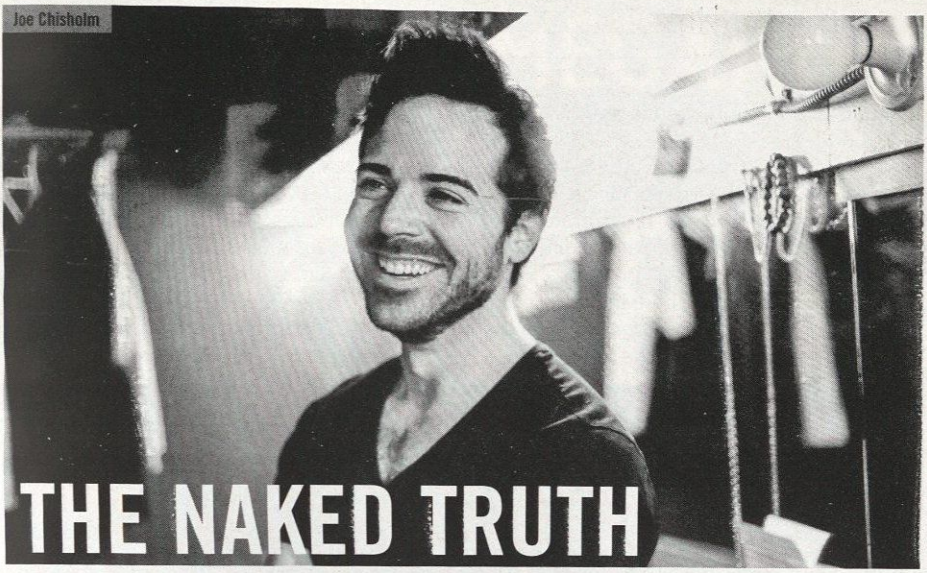
Three things that make a perfect day

Trees, trails and time to get lost

Three words that describe me are

Passionate, Curious and Stubborn.

My autograph Seth Numrich



THE NAKED TRUTH

Why the nudity in *Afterglow* extends beyond just the physical

By Joe Chisholm

I won't lie, I am the last person I ever expected to agree to be in a show with nudity. Almost a year into my time at *Afterglow*, currently running at the Loft at the Davenport Theatre, a sense of disbelief still bubbles up when I think about it. Disbelief that triggers decades of self-confidence and body-image issues, making the awkward, overweight 12-year-old Joe—a Joe that is still very much alive and well inside me—want to go hide in a corner.

But the show must go on. And I couldn't be more grateful and proud that it has, for months and months past its assumed end date. This show needs to be seen. This story needs to be told.

But the nudity!

I've seen people passing our theatre and gawking at the poster. Nakedness is definitely everyone's favorite topic going into the show. And I love the discourse that has been sparked by *Afterglow* and its moments of nudity. But I think it is important to reaffirm the fact that sex and nudity are two separate things. That is a big takeaway of this show. In my mind, nudity onstage or onscreen, as long as is it serves a purpose and is not gratuitous, is simply another costume (or lack thereof).

But what about that *first* time?

I joined *Afterglow* with only two rehearsals and a put-in, so my mind was stretched so thin—trying to figure out my track and walk across a wet mirrored floor without dying—there was no bandwidth in my brain left to be concerned about people seeing me in the buff. By the time I had finally felt settled in, it was already a week into my run and hundreds of people had seen me naked. The condensed rehearsal time ended up being a blessing.

Leaving nudity aside, my favorite part of *Afterglow* is the audience discussion that I get to take part in or hear about after the lights come up. *Afterglow* moves you. That is what drew me to it. It's relatable to anyone and everyone, regardless of gender, sexuality, or relationship status. We have all experienced, to some degree, each of the three arcs of love that these characters traverse over 90 minutes. *Afterglow* is as naked a show emotionally as it is physically. It is a marathon, for actor and audience. For a show that is assumed to have a niche demographic, it is truly universal in its concepts and questions. You should join the conversation; you won't regret it. Or if you do, at least you saw some guys get naked.

Plus, my mom highly recommends it.

This theatre originally opened as the Mansfield (in honor of the distinguished actor Richard Mansfield) on February 15, 1926. In 1960, it was rechristened the Brooks Atkinson Theatre in tribute to the New York Times drama critic. The theatre is currently under the direction of the Nederlander Organization.

Recent productions here include *Love Letters*; the musicals *After Midnight* and *Hands on a Hardbody*; *Peter and the Starcatcher*, with Christian Borle (Tony Award); *Relatively Speaking*; *Rain: A Tribute to the Beatles*; *Rock of Ages*; a revival of *Grease!*; *A Moon for the Misbegotten*; *The Times They Are A-Changin'*; *The Odd Couple*; *The Blonde in the Thunderbird*; *Mark Twain Tonight!*; *Democracy*; *Jumpers*; Jackie Mason's *Laughing Room Only*; *The Look of Love*; *Medea*; Patti LuPone and Peter Gallagher in *Noises Off* (the Atkinson also housed the original production, starring Dorothy Loudon and Victor Garber); *Jane Eyre*; and Derek Jacobi in *Uncle Vanya*.

The 1990s saw *The Iceman Cometh*; *Wait Until Dark*; *Play On!*; *Taking Sides*; *Buried Child*; *On the Waterfront*; *What's Wrong With This Picture?*; *She Loves Me*; *Death and the Maiden*, starring Glenn Close (Tony Award), Gene Hackman, and Richard Dreyfuss; *Shadowlands*; and *The Cemetery Club*.

The 1980s saw personal appearances by Stephanie Mills; Peter, Paul & Mary; and Victor Borge. A revival of the 1942 play *Cafe Crown* transferred here from the downtown New York Shakespeare Festival. Beginning in 1986, Jackie Mason's *The World According to Me!* played several engagements, garnering a special Tony in 1987.

Glenn Close, Sam Waterston, Mary Beth Hurt, and Simon Jones starred in *Benefactors*. Rex Harrison, Claudette Colbert, Lynn Redgrave, George Rose, and other stars revived *Aren't We All*; Ben Kingsley as *Edmund Kean* played a limited engagement; Liv Ullmann starred in *Ghosts*; Christopher Durang's *Beyond Therapy* brought lunacy; Tom Courtenay and Paul Rogers won applause in *The Dresser*; and the 1980s began with *Talley's Folly*.

MARC J. FRANKLIN

Highlights of the 1970s included Cliff Gorman in *Lenny* (Tony Award); *The River Niger*; Lynn Redgrave in *My Fat Friend*; James Earl Jones and Kevin Conway in *Of Mice and Men*; *Same Time, Next Year*, starring Ellen Burstyn (Tony Award) and Charles Grodin; and Jack Lemmon in *Tribute*.

The 1960s brought *Indians* with Stacy Keach; Albert Finney and Zena Walker in *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg*; Dustin Hoffman in *Jimmy Shine*; Neil Simon's *Come Blow Your Horn*; and Charles Boyer in *Man and Boy*.

Highlights of earlier years: Fredric March in *Years Ago*, with his wife Florence Eldridge; *Anna Lucasta*; and Marc Connelly's Pulitzer winner *The Green Pastures*.

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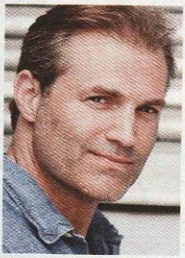

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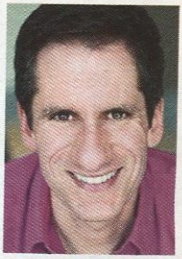

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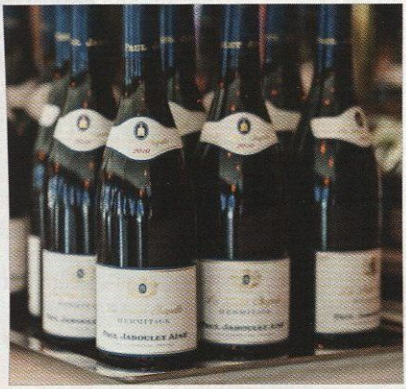

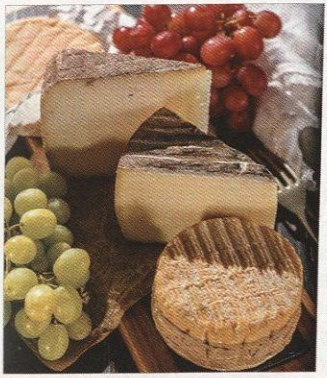

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By Mark Peikert

Barrett Wilbert Weed and Grey Henson
PHOTO BY MARC J. FRANKLIN

Don't be fooled by the pink—there are some very serious messages under the candy-coated gloss of *Mean Girls* at the August Wilson Theatre. And not just the obvious ones about kindness and bullying as new-girl-in-school Cady infiltrates the Plastics clique—with the help of new best friends, the arty Janis and the "almost too gay to function" Damian—and loses herself in the process.

"Letting Janis look good was really important to me," says Barrett Wilbert Weed, who has played the role since the Washington, D.C., premiere. "I wind up playing these characters a lot: They have self-esteem issues or they're going through a lot as a young adult. And, especially for girls, it's important to see that people who are put together can still feel shitty about themselves."

"Janis is way more glam in this version," interjects Grey Henson, a Tony nominee for his riotous performance as Damian. Acquaintances before *Mean Girls*, Henson and Weed began to grow close at their final callback, when they made the choice to enter the audition room as if they were best friends in real life.

"We held hands and Bethany Knox, the casting director, said, 'Do you guys know each other?'" Henson recalls. "And we're like, 'Yes!' And she said, I remember it specifically, 'I love that!'"

The duo share an easy offstage rapport that's magnified when stepping into Janis and Damian's costumes. Weed laughingly recalls a wardrobe malfunction that resulted in Henson's suspenders dragging a stool behind him during a song. Henson, for his part, lovingly points to a shared lack of filter between Janis and Weed.

In addition to reminding audiences that appearances don't make life any easier, *Mean Girls* is also slyly putting two queer characters in place as the musical's narrators. That's right: In Weed's characterization, Janis is a lesbian, though Tina Fey's script and Casey Nicholaw's direction never address it overtly.

"Tina and Casey just left it up to me to decide who I wanted her to love," Weed says. "She's definitely not hiding it, it's more just like she does not feel the need to label herself."

And while Damian's sexuality is far more archetypal—he favors T-shirts featuring *RuPaul's Drag Race* and iconic pop divas, after all—Fey and songwriters Nell Benjamin and Jeffrey Richmond also have him recount a messy public meltdown over a boy in the show-stopping "Stop."

"It is such a great little gay anthem," Henson says. "In that moment, 'Stop' is sort of like, 'We all do this, universally.' Everyone screws up how they present themselves on social media and to the public because you get freaked out, you get in your head."

And how does Henson stop himself? "I throw my phone across the room."

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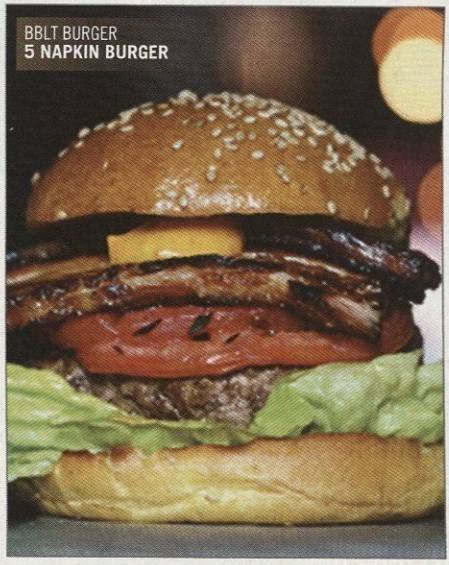

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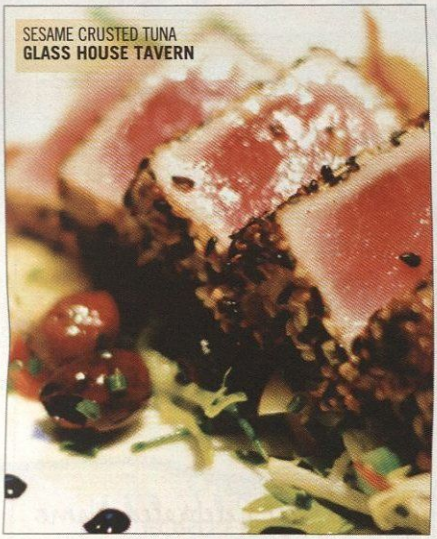
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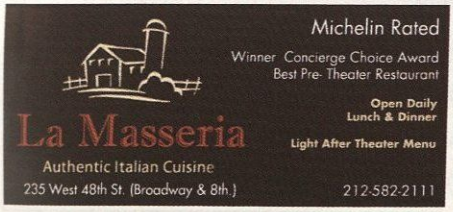

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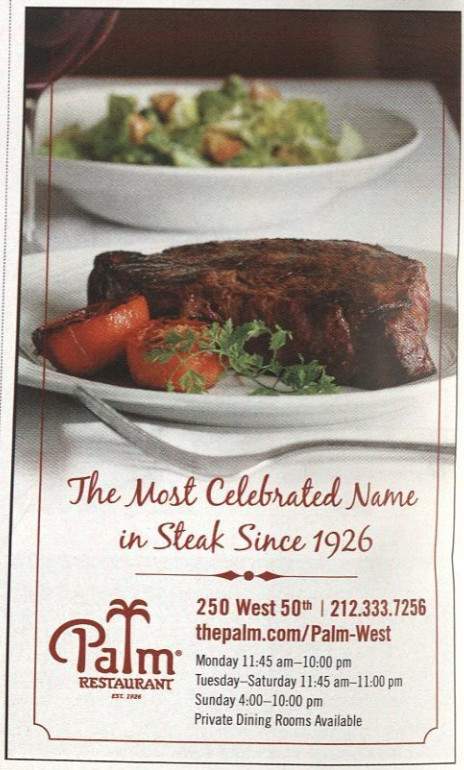

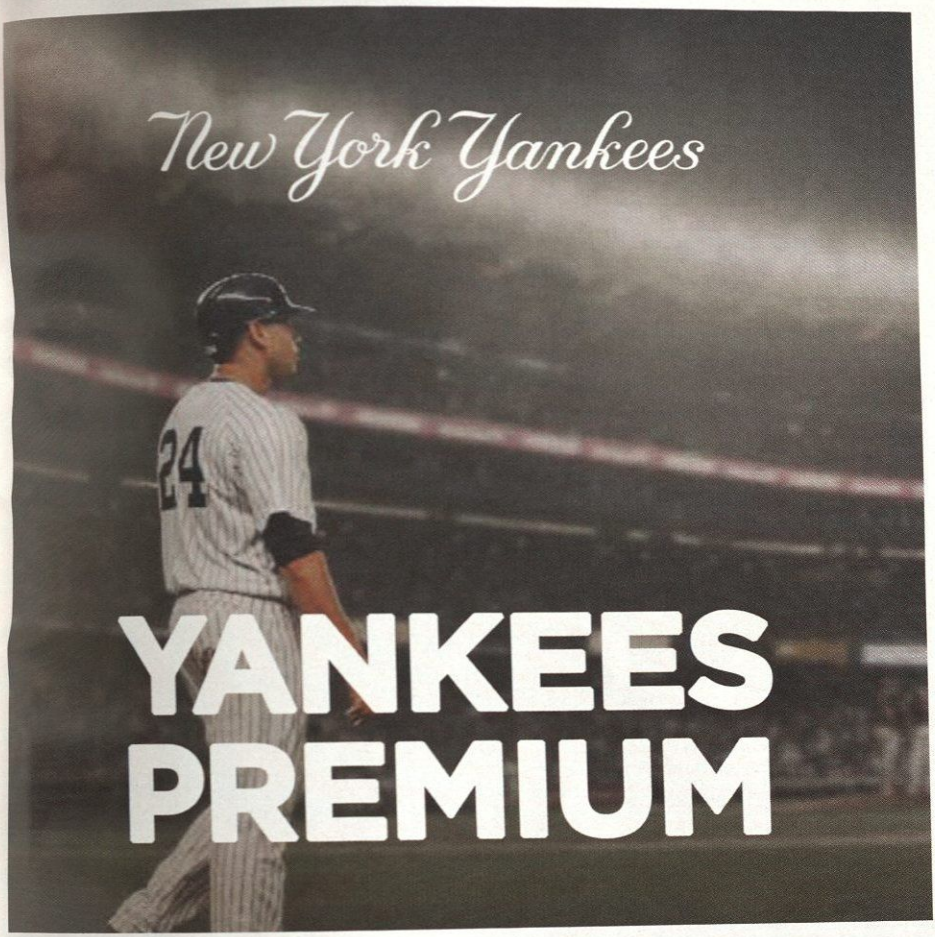

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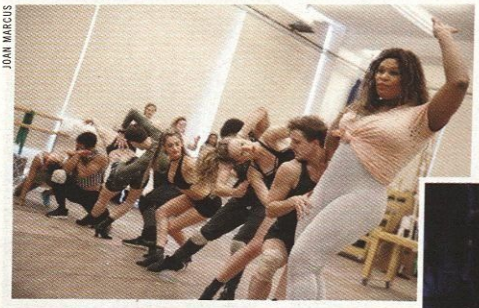
Moving to the **Broadway Beat**

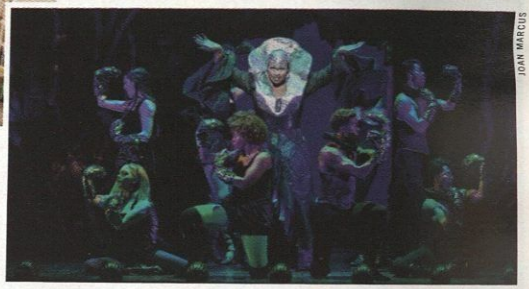
RuPaul's Drag Race star Peppermint makes history in the merry new musical *Head Over Heels*

By Ryan McPhee

In the new musical *Head Over Heels,* the oracle Pythio utilizes a Go-Go's tune to deliver a portentous prophecy, but not before declaring, "Pythio is a non-binary plural." The viceroy Dametas, despite existing in an Elizabethan fantasy, immediately follows: "Neither he nor she, but…they. Pythio the Oracle is they."

JOAN MARCUS





JOAN MARCUS

The cast of *Head Over Heels* in rehearsal (above) and onstage (right)

"To be honest, it goes a lot smoother in the play than I've experienced," admits Peppermint, the trans drag performer who plays Pythio, laughing. That unassuming acceptance, presented in a theatrical and fantastical context, drew Peppermint to the project—a Michael Mayer–directed reworking of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* utilizing the songs of '80s superstars The Go-Go's. "To people who might be new to these issues, it's served in a loving way that people can easily understand. On the other hand, it shows people who identify as non-binary, gender non-conforming, or trans: Look at what the possibilities are."

When the show officially opens at the Hudson Theatre July 26 (previews begin June 23), Peppermint will become the first woman who openly identifies as trans to originate a principal role on Broadway. Perhaps it's a wordy distinction, but Peppermint does not take it lightly and recognizes there may be previous artists who identified as trans.

Peppermint opens that door in the theatre community after breaking similar ground in the drag world, becoming the first drag queen to compete on *RuPaul's Drag Race* as an openly trans woman (others have come out as trans while on the show or after). She placed as runner-up in Season 9, though she had become a fixture of the New York nightlife scene before the series gave a national platform to drag performers.

The Peppermint persona was Agnes Moore's first outlet to express her gender identity. Now, the name appears in Broadway billing. "Peppermint has served me very well over the years. I wanted to give something back to the drag persona—and to show people that this drag queen can be successful in other realms outside of nightlife," she explains. "I still have a private life, but publicly, I'll always be known as Peppermint. It's my rock 'n' roll name."

Through her performance, Peppermint will introduce audiences to new perceptions of gender and spread a tale of tolerance. Broadway may be new territory, but that responsibility is not: "As drag performers and trans women, it's in our bloodline—our drag ancestry—to march on the front lines. *Drag Race* allowed me to connect with folks who my story resonated with—people I never would have had the opportunity to connect with.

"I'm hoping that will happen with this Broadway platform as well. I can already see that happening."

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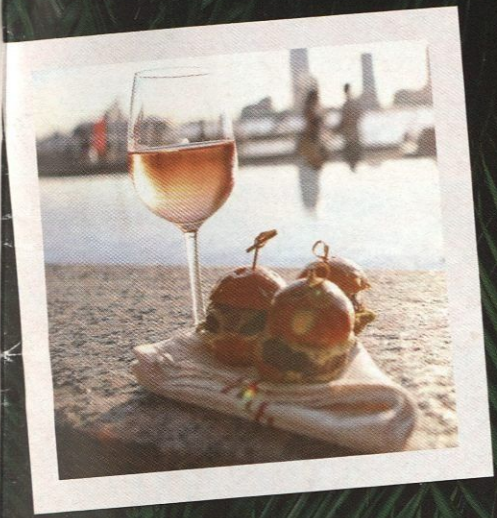

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